

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. An information recording/reproducing apparatus that performs reading and writing of information with respect to an information recording medium in which user data areas and alternative areas 10 are alternately arranged, said apparatus comprising:

means for assigning, when an error occurs in a certify process or a verify process with respect to one of the user data areas and an alternative destination is to be assigned, in the case where an unused field does 15 not exist in the alternative area corresponding to the user data area in which the error occurs, the alternative destination in another alternative area on which the certify process or the verify process is performed.

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2. The information recording/reproducing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising: 25

means for performing, when the error occurs in the certify process or the verify process and the alternative destination is to be assigned, in the case where the certify process and the verify process are not 5 performed on the alternative area having the alternative destination, the certify process and the verify process on the alternative area having the alternative destination; and

means for assigning, when an error occurs in 10 the certify process or the verify process performed by said means for performing the certify process and the verify process, the alternative destination in an alternative area other than the alternative area in which the error occurs.

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3. The information recording/reproducing 20 apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

means for performing the certify process and the verify process on the alternative area first before the user data area; and

means for registering, as a position the use 25 of which is prohibited, a position in the alternative

area at which position an error occurs in the certify process or the verify process performed by means for performing the certify process and the verify process.

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4. The information recording/reproducing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

10 means for maintaining a position at which the error occurs when the certify process or the verify process is performed on the one of the user data areas; and

15 means for assigning, after the certify process and the verify process are performed on the alternative area, the alternative destination with respect to the user data area having the maintained position.

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5. An information recording/reproducing apparatus that performs recording and reproducing of information with respect to a recording medium having a 25 plurality of user data areas for recording user data

therein and a plurality of alternative areas corresponding to the respective user data areas and each having an alternative field for replacing a defect field in the user data areas, said apparatus comprising:

5 a defect field detection part that detects a defect field at the time of a format process or recording of information;

10 a first usable field determination part that determines whether an alternative field allowing replacement exists in the alternative area corresponding to the user data area having the defect field detected by said defect field detection part; and

15 a first alternative field assigning part that assigns, when said first usable field determination part determines that the alternative field does not exist, as an alternative field for the defect field, an alternative field allowing replacement in another alternative area to which the format process is performed.

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6. The information recording/reproducing apparatus as claimed in claim 5, further comprising:

a formatted alternative area determination part that determines whether an alternative area exists on which the format process is performed;

a second alternative field assigning part that 5 assigns, when said formatted alternative area determination part determines that an alternative area does not exist on which area the format process is performed, a predetermined alternative field in an alternative area on which the format process is not 10 performed as an alternative field for the defect field; and

an alternative field format process part that performs the format process on the alternative field assigned by said second alternative field assigning part.

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7. The information recording/reproducing 20 apparatus as claimed in claim 6, further comprising:

a use prohibition part that, when the defect detection part detects an alternative field on which the format process is performed by the alternative field format process part as a defect field, prohibits use of 25 the defect field,

wherein the second alternative field assigning part assigns, as an alternative field for the defect field, another alternative field in the alternative area including the alternative field the use of which is 5 prohibited by said use prohibition part.

10 8. The information recording/reproducing apparatus as claimed in claim 6, further comprising:
 a second usable field determination part that determines, when the formatted alternative area determination part determines that an alternative area 15 exists on which the format process is performed, whether an alternative field allowing replacement exists in the alternative area on which the format process is performed,
 wherein, when the second usable field determination part determines that an alternative field allowing replacement does not exist, the second alternative field assigning part assigns, as an alternative field for the defect field, a predetermined field in an alternative area on which the format process 25 is not performed.

wherein, when the second usable field
15 determination part determines that an alternative field
allowing replacement does not exist, the second
alternative field assigning part assigns, as an
alternative field for the defect field, a predetermined
field in an alternative area on which the format process
20 is not performed.

25 10. An information recording/reproducing

apparatus that performs recording and reproducing of information with respect to a recording medium having a plurality of user data areas for recording user data therein and a plurality of alternative areas

5 corresponding to the respective user data areas and each having an alternative field for replacing a defect field in the user data areas, said apparatus comprising:

an alternative area format process part that performs a format process on the alternative areas

10 separately from the user data areas;

a defect field detection part that detects a defect field existing in the alternative area at the time of the format process by said alternative area format process part; and

15 a use prohibition part that prohibits, when the defect field is detected by said defect field detection part, using the defect field as the alternative field.

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11. An information recording/reproducing apparatus that performs recording and reproducing of information with respect to a recording medium having a

plurality of user data areas for recording user data therein and a plurality of alternative areas corresponding to the respective user data areas and each having an alternative field for replacing a defect field

5 in the user data areas, said apparatus comprising:

an error detection part that detects an error that occurs at the time of a format process;

a usable field determination part that determines whether a field allowing replacement exists 10 in the alternative area corresponding to the user data area in which the error detected by said error detection part occurs;

an error occurrence position information maintaining part that maintains, when said usable field 15 determination part determines that the field allowing replacement does not exist, information relating to a position at which the error occurs; and

an alternative field assigning part that assigns, after the format process ends, an alternative 20 field for replacing the defect field based on the information maintained by said error occurrence position information maintaining part.

12. A program for causing a computer to carry out:

 a procedure that performs recording and

5 reproducing of information with respect to a recording medium having a plurality of user data areas for recording user data therein and a plurality of alternative areas corresponding to the respective user data areas and each having an alternative field for

10 replacing a defect field in the user data areas;

 a defect field detection procedure that detects the defect field at the time of recording of information or a format process;

 a first usable field determination procedure

15 that determines whether an alternative field allowing replacement exists in the alternative area corresponding to the user data area having the defect field detected in said defect field detection procedure; and

 a first alternative field assigning procedure

20 that assigns, when said first usable field determination procedure determines that the alternative field does not exist, an alternative field allowing replacement in another alternative area to which the format process is performed as an alternative field for the defect field.

13. A program for causing a computer to carry
5 out:

a procedure that performs recording and
reproducing of information with respect to a recording
medium having a plurality of user data areas for
recording user data therein and a plurality of
10 alternative areas corresponding to the respective user
data areas and each having an alternative field for
replacing a defect field in the user data areas;

an alternative area format process procedure
that performs a format process on the alternative areas
15 separately from the user data areas;

a defect field detection procedure that
detects, at the time of the format process in said
alternative area format process procedure, a defect
field existing in the alternative areas; and

20 a use prohibition procedure that prohibits,
when the defect field is detected in said defect field
detection procedure, use of the defect field as an
alternative field.

14. A program for causing a computer to carry out:

5 a procedure that performs recording and reproducing of information with respect to a recording medium having a plurality of user data areas for recording user data therein and a plurality of alternative areas corresponding to the respective user

10 data and each having an alternative field for replacing a defect field in the user data areas;

 an error detection procedure that detects an error that occurs at the time of a format process;

 a usable field determination procedure that

15 determines whether an alternative field allowing replacement exists in the alternative area corresponding to the user data area in which the error detected in said error detection procedure occurs;

 an error occurrence position information

20 maintaining procedure that maintains, when said usable field determination procedure determines that the alternative area does not exist, information relating to a position at which the error occurs; and

 an alternative area assigning procedure that

25 assigns, after the format process ends, an alternative

field for replacing the detect field based on the information maintained in said error occurrence position information maintaining procedure.

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15. A computer-readable recording medium recording a program for causing a computer to carry out;
10 a procedure that performs recording and reproducing of information with respect to a recording medium having a plurality of user data areas for recording user data therein and a plurality of alternative areas corresponding to the respective user
15 data areas and each having an alternative field for replacing a defect field in the user data areas;
 a defect field detection procedure that detects the defect field at the time of recording of information or a format process;
20 a first usable field determination procedure that determines whether an alternative field allowing replacement exists in the alternative area corresponding to the user data area having the defect field detected in said defect field detection procedure; and
25 a first alternative field assigning procedure

that assigns, when said first usable field determination procedure determines that the alternative field does not exist, an alternative field allowing replacement in another alternative area to which the format process is 5 performed as an alternative field for the defect field.

10 16. A computer-readable recording medium recording a program for causing a computer to carry out: a procedure that performs recording and reproducing of information with respect to a recording medium having a plurality of user data areas for 15 recording user data therein and a plurality of alternative areas corresponding to the respective user data areas and each having an alternative field for replacing a defect field in the user data areas; an alternative area format process procedure 20 that performs a format process on the alternative areas separately from the user data areas; a defect field detection procedure that detects, at the time of the format process in said alternative area format process procedure, a defect 25 field existing in the alternative areas; and

a use prohibition procedure that prohibits, when the defect field is detected in said defect field detection procedure, use of the defect field as an alternative field.

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17. A computer-readable recording medium
10 recording a program for causing a computer to carry out:
 a procedure that performs recording and
 reproducing of information with respect to a recording
 medium having a plurality of user data areas for
 recording user data therein and a plurality of
15 alternative areas corresponding to the respective user
 data areas and each having an alternative field for
 replacing a defect field in the user data areas;
 an error detection procedure that detects an
 error that occurs at the time of a format process;
20 a usable field determination procedure that
 determines whether an alternative field allowing
 replacement exists in the alternative area corresponding
 to the user data area in which the error detected in
 said error detection procedure occurs;
25 an error occurrence position information

maintaining procedure that maintains, when said usable field determination procedure determines that the alternative area does not exist, information relating to a position at which the error occurs; and

5 an alternative area assigning procedure that assigns, after the format process ends, an alternative field for replacing the detect field based on the information maintained in said error occurrence position information maintaining procedure.

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18. A defect field management method of
15 managing an alternative field with respect to a recording medium having a plurality of user data areas for recording user data therein and a plurality of alternative areas corresponding to the respective user data areas and each having an alternative field for
20 replacing the defect field in the user data areas, said method comprising the steps of:

 detecting the defect field at the time of recording of information or a format process;

 determining whether an alternative field
25 allowing replacement exists in the alternative area

corresponding to the user data area having the detected defect field; and

assigning, when said step of determining determines that the alternative field allowing 5 replacement does not exist, an alternative field allowing replacement in another alternative area on which the format process is performed as an alternative field for the defect field.

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19. A defect field management method of managing an alternative field with respect to a 15 recording medium having a plurality of user data areas for recording user data therein and a plurality of alternative areas corresponding to the respective user data areas and each having an alternative field for replacing the defect field in the user data areas, said 20 method comprising the steps of:

performing a format process on the alternative areas separately from the user data areas;

detecting, at the time of the format process in said step of performing the format process, a defect 25 field existing in the alternative areas; and

prohibiting use of the detected defect field as the alternative field.

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20. A defect field management method of managing an alternative field with respect to a recording medium having a plurality of user data areas for recording user data therein and a plurality of alternative areas corresponding to the respective user data areas and each having an alternative field for replacing the defect field in the user data areas, said method comprising the steps of:
 - 15 detecting an error that occurs at the time of a format process;
 - determining whether an alternative field allowing replacement exists in the alternative area corresponding to the user data area in which the detected error occurs;
 - 20 maintaining, when the step of determining determines that the alternative field allowing replacement does not exist, information relating to a position at which the error occurs; and
 - 25 assigning, after the format process ends, an

alternative field for replacing the defect field based on the information maintained in the step of maintaining the information.